

Cork Food Policy Council

Report of the Chair June 2016



This has been another busy year for the CFPC as we continue to strengthen our links with other organisations across Cork and build our profile. Last summer, with the financial support of Ronnie Dorney, Principal Community Worker and Cork Healthy Cities we were able to create the post of part-time coordinator on a three year basis. The arrival of Tara Kenny to the post has been of enormous benefit to the work of the Steering Committee and has particularly enabled us to strengthen activity in the food growing area. Besides hosting a very successful workshop in November that sought to bring together a number of growers from across the city, the CFPC funded and has been leading a very successful edible greening initiative. With support from NICHE community garden and Bessborough Horticultural training programme, Cork city now has 20 upcycled planter boxes located on Friar Street, Barrack Street, Shandon Street, North Main Street and Prosperity Square growing roughly 20 varieties of vegetables, herbs and edible flowers.

Work has proceeded on other fronts too. A short-life task group (Marianne, Lucy, Barrie, Alice) was created to explore the possibility of establishing a recognition scheme through which we could better identify and celebrate activities – whether run by small businesses or community initiatives – that reflect the CFPC’s core principles. We expect this to make a splash in the autumn. Another short-life task group considered the options on how the CFPC might be formally constituted. In the end, we agreed that - for the moment - it might work best if we operated under the administrative umbrella provided by Niche and this will allow us to utilise their charitable status to apply for grants and other supports.

Finally, the Chair has been engaged in conversations around ways to reshape and improve the food system in Cork. Given the level of public interest in the topic of ‘hospital food’ an opportunity arose to meet with Tony McNamara, the CEO of Cork University Hospital Group, and other senior staff to discuss prospects for making greater use of local food in the hospital’s procurement system. A most welcome development has seen the hospital look to the Churchfield Community Trust to supply some fresh produce and we hope this initiative will prosper and develop further. At the same time and in response to UCC’s sustainability strategy, the UCC contract caterer, KSG, has now leased 8 acres of land at Curaheen and is working with Waterfall Farm to supply its operations with fresh vegetables. In both cases, this shows

that two hugely significant public institutions in Cork can provide real leadership in improving the quality and sourcing of food that it supplies to its clients.

Overview of achievements and progress this year in accordance with CFPC values and vision:

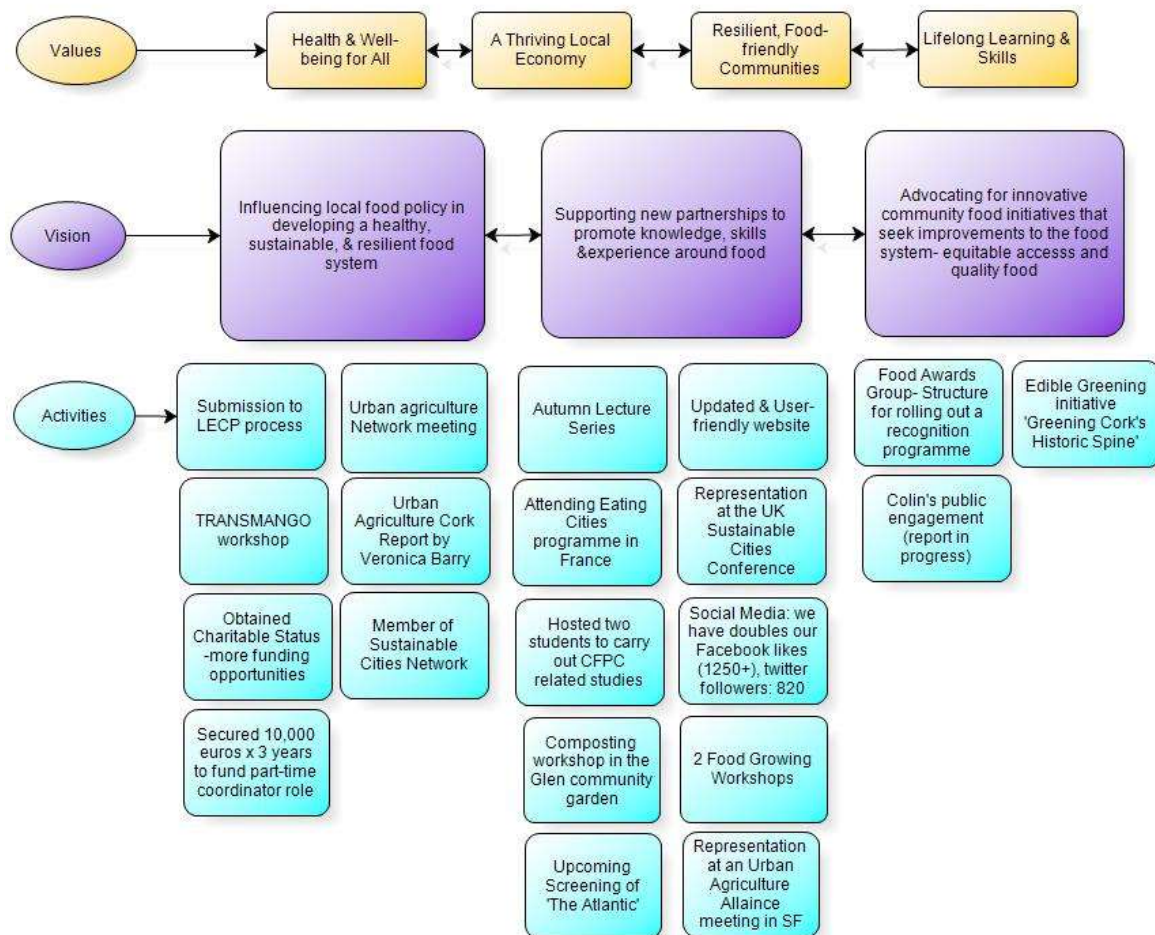


Figure 1: CFPC Values, Vision & Achievements in 2015-2016

Research-related activities

- Short-term scientific mission in November undertaken on food growing activities in and around the city by Veronica Barry, and funded under the COST Action 'Urban Agriculture Europe'. Half-day workshop held at Camden Palace (c. 50 participants). Report is available on the website.
- EU FP7 project, TRANSMANGO, supported two one-day workshops (22nd April, 13th May) that were designed to help the CFPC develop local food and nutrition security transition pathways. A number of CFPC members and other stakeholders participated in these workshops and contributed to the findings.

- CITRUS: Cities for socially inclusive and climate resilient food systems, is a proposed project for which a 1st stage concept note has been submitted for review under the DEAR programme (development education and awareness raising) of the EC. If the final proposal is approved for support, the city of Ghent (Bel) would serve as coordinator of the project and Cork will be a partner city with the FPC its main area of expertise.
- Two week visit by Gloria Giambartolomei, a Research Master's student in the Sustainable Development (Environmental Governance) programme, Utrecht University, in the Netherlands (May). Gloria is now undertaking comparative research in Bergamo, Italy.

Public Engagement: Public talks delivered by the Chair with significant mention of the CFPC

21 May 2015: All-Island Environmental Health Officers Association Annual Conference, Cork

24 Aug 2015: Taste Council Summer School, Wicklow

12 Sep 2015: GIY Waterford Harvest Festival, Waterford

5 Oct 2015: American University of Rome, Italy

23 Oct 2015: University of Bergamo, Italy

18 Jan 2016: Irish Food Writers Guild, Dublin

10 March 2016: East Cork Slow Food event, Ballymaloe

6 April 2016: University of Toronto, Canada

11 May 2016: National Economic & Social Council-ISSP conference, Dublin

27 May 2016: Food for the Future conference, Kinsale

3 June 2016: Grow it Yourself stage, Bloom Garden & Food Festival, Dublin

Articles

Sage, C. (2016) Why we need food policies. Organic Matters magazine,

Policy Engagement

Submission to the Cork City Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2021 '*PURE CORK - An Action Plan for the City*'

Meeting with the 3 TDs representing the Social Democrats party (Catherine Murphy, Stephen Donnelly, Roisin Shortall) on the need for a new agri-food policy for Ireland.